

1851 JUNE 2

Lewisburg June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1851

Dear Ben

I suppose that you have wondered why I have not written before this, the reason is that I have been so unwell since I have been here that I have not had much time for anything at all, I have had the fever and Ague nearly every day since I have been here. The school this session is very thin and a great many new students here while the best portion that were here when you were here have not returned. Professor Taylor leaves in the fall. The rooms that you and I used to occupy is filled with two Country jakes, Andy and I occupy the room that Mrs Elder and Dix used to sleep in, it is a very small room and you can imagine how warm it will be this summer. Last Saturday I received an invitation to Mrs De Conte pie nie, did you receive one? When I came up I met Lewis Merrick at the Junction on his way to West Point, he said that he would have liked to see you. Ben when you answer this letter tell me when your school breaks up ours breaks up eleven weeks from next Thursday. Andy is still working at his trade and intends continuing at it this summer. Pottinhouse is not here this session but Johnny Smith is still here. Ed Green is boarding at Mrs Backhaus with Abe McMen.

I commenced this letter last Monday expecting to send it on Tuesday morning, but on that morning I had another attack of the Ague and was very sick all day. This morning I received a letter from you dated May 30<sup>th</sup>, and was glad to hear that you were well. I spoke to Justin in regard to that Society matter and he said that it was all right.



In your letter you say that you regret the change you have made, and would sooner be in Lewisburg, I don't <sup>think</sup> you would want to stay here this summer if you were here for a while, for the school is thin and nothing going on. I am tired already and wish the session was over, but I think that if I had my usual health I should like it better and enjoy myself more than I do. You want me to give you all the news in Lewisburg, well to tell the truth there are very little here, but I will give you all there is. Last Monday they brought the telegraph wires to this town and fixed them up in Mr. Heacock's office of the Chronicle, it is now in operation. The other day Enx Whit & Mag McQuadden inquired very affectionately for you. Miss. Frier. Em Jones is teaching school, she has about twenty-five scholars; as I passed there the other day she was standing at the door, she looked at me very hard enough to say where is Benny. The house that Mrs. Elder used to occupy last winter, they are putting an extension to this summer. Well Ben I think that I have given you all the news in Lewisburg at present. Harry Ford is here this summer. Alfred Hays has quit school. F. J. Beck is not here this session. Jim Mc Gregor nor the Touffit <sup>ker</sup> boys are not back. N. Hal is here. Tommy Hood is not here.

Ben I shall have to close as I have nothing more to say. When you tell me when your school breaks up and when you expect to be in Harrisburg. Write very soon

Your Affectionate &  
John. S. Horster



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Mr Benjamin S. Foster  
Sennard School  
Hartsville  
Bucks. County  
Pa



1851 JUNE 13

Lewisburg June 13<sup>th</sup> 1851

Dear Ben

I received your truly kind letter dated June 9<sup>th</sup> by yesterday's mail. I am glad to hear that you are well and beginning to like your new school, which I hope will continue so. I am attending to my studies as usual, and it is beginning to go quite well. By this time I have got rid of the Ague, having had nothing of it for the last ten days and I hope that it is a going to leave me altogether. This town is most ~~surprizing~~ outrageous dull, and the students that are here this summer are not much better. You wish to know whether there are any new young ladies here this session, there are a few, but the majority of them are from the country and of course very Dutch, Mary Johnston's sister and Pennypacker's daughter are among the best looking, you can form some opinion what kind of looking girls are here this summer. Mag McFadden and Em Christ inquired very affectionately for you the other day; of course I gave them a full account of your whereabouts and all your best respects. You wish to know when Lewis Merrill will be at West Point and his directions. He is to be there between the first and twenty first of this month, the direction is this. Cadet Lewis Merrill. U. S. Military Academy. West Point. New York that is all that is necessary. You say that Frank Chubb is to be at your school, you can tell him where I am and that I would like to hear from him, when he has leisure time; ask him how long he expects to remain in Harrisburg, and tell him that I will be in N. Y. about the twenty first of August and



should like to ~~see~~ see him very much if he would still be there. Ben did you leave a pair of slippers in the Coffin room Ed Green says that there is a pair there and he thinks that they are yours, when you write tell me if they are yours and what I shall do with them. I told Ed Green what you said about his entering Yale college in the fall, he says that he don't know yet whether he will go to college in the fall or not, but that he is not a coming back to this place. You say that you had a letter from Lil Rutherford and she says that Allick Johnston and Sam Lawrence are beginning to go with the girls, that is a move that I never expected to ~~see~~ <sup>hear</sup>, as for Sam I always thought that he was too bashful, and for Allick it may do him some good, as it may take away some of his rowdiness, I wish them both good luck. I had a letter from Father a few days ago, they are all well at present, he says that Mr Stevenson has sold out his stock of groceries and returned to Baltimore. I wonder what poor John Murphy will get at, I should like to hear very much. Father says that Mary Simons is in Harrisburg with her two children, and that Henry has returned home, he thought that <sup>the place</sup> did not agree with him, I think that he had a good reason to think that the place did not agree with him, as I understand he was sent away.

I suppose that as your place is so small that there will not be much going on, on the fourth of July although this place is small, they are trying to get up something. There is to be a party on that hill opposite to Northumberland comprised of persons from this place Milton, Muncy. Williamsport and all the small towns around, I think that if I can get off I shall go down in the afternoon. The school has also speaking by members of the Junior Collegiate class, I believe that Messrs. Blakely. Armstrong. Lane. Still and McLeod are the speakers. Last Saturday afternoon the fire company had a parade, the company



is composed of about thirty members; the people in this town thought that it was something grand to see them, but it was nothing compared with the firemen of Harrisburg.

Ving is spending this week in Milton with Miss Schrover of this place, she expects to be down on Saturday.

Well Ben I shall have to close as my pen is very bad, and is getting worse every time I write. So good bye, give my best respects to all that inquire for me.

Your Affectionate &c  
John P. Donister

P.S. Answer very soon.

your friend J.P.D.....





*M<sup>rs</sup>. Benjamin L. Foster*  
*Vennant School*  
*Wartville*  
*Bucks Co*  
*Pa*



1853 Jan. 10

Hartsville Jan 10<sup>th</sup> 1853.

My Dear Mother

I am again at school, and I hope soon to be again at study. I came out on Saturday afternoon, and left James in the city, and think he will be there till Thursday. I spent a very pleasant time in the city. I saw Mrs Eldridge, Mrs Douglass and the Vickersberys. (I fear I have not spelled the name right) Mrs Eldridge is a very pleasant lady (I took dinner and tea at Capt Chustones, in deed I was there most of my time,) she looks very well. They all seem to think a great deal of James.

I did not see Jennie McKon as I did not know her address, and if I had, I could not have found time to call on her, but James will, before he leaves the city. James did not mention, what his business in the city was, and I heard nothing while there, if his intention to do as we supposed, we will be

Mrs Eldridge has two fine children. The Lillie, and I think she feels the loss of little Kate as they call her very much. Stuart is I think very intelligent for one so young. I felt as much at home there in a short time, as if I had been at home, and I was sorry to leave the city, before I was generally glad to get out of it. I have told the Misses



Young when I want to go to college, and they say  
I can do it. but I make myself perfectly easy on  
that score, as I know there will be no difficulty if  
I do as I ought to. I suppose you do not see so  
much of Bob and Mont since James is gone, and  
you have less trouble about the smoking. I have  
not yet got over the low spirits, that always attend  
me on leaving home, and I look back to those little  
things with longing, and a wish that they were to  
do over, as you said after I leave home, I always  
see things that I might have done better, but you  
know that it was not from a want of affection  
that I <sup>did</sup> ~~was~~ wrong, but from a habit I have gotten into. Do  
not think that this is the repentance attending  
home sickness, I may think of it more just after  
leaving home, but I often think of it. I shall write  
to Father on Friday. I have written quite a long letter  
and I will close. Give my love to Father. Grandfather  
and the children. Write soon to

Your affectionate son  
Bery L. Foster.

B.L.F.

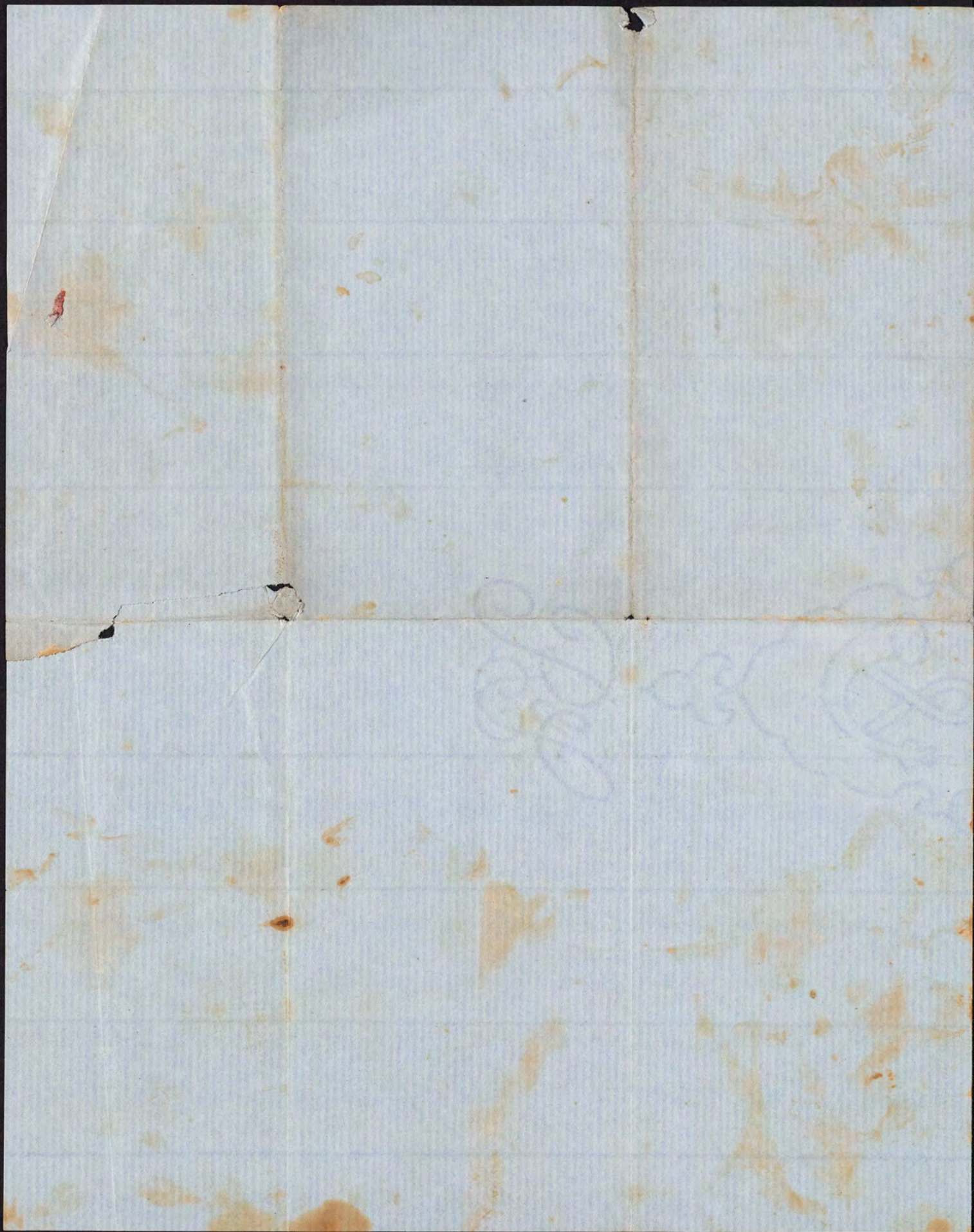
I should like very much if you could send me  
the papers during the session of the Legislature, I have  
written a short letter to James to know when he would  
be at Erie. I will expect a letter soon from you, as  
I always am anxious to hear from home, and I



hope you will not disappoint me. Give my love  
to Aunt. Adieu.

Ben.







1853 Nov. 27

Yale college Nov 27 1853

Dear Mother

I have just returned from church, my fire is out and the room very cold, I will write but a few lines I received your letter some days ago, and should have answered it sooner, but I am now very busy and can find but little time to write, the term is drawing to a close, and it will take every moment of my time, to regain my stand, it is a very difficult matter when once below average, to come up, but I don't despair but that, I will succeed. tell father, that on last Friday I asked Prof. Wadley whether I was improving my stand, he told me I had made considerable improvement. I increased it  $\frac{15}{100}$ , which is considerable, but I am still low. Yet I have much hope that I will succeed. Thanksgiving day is over, it is here a day very much like our Christmas, and it was a very cold one we did not have cold weather before that. I have a great many letters to write but my friends will have to do without answers until I have more time at my disposal, we are terribly driven here, we write three times a day, and even if one does not study still there is a great deal of care on his mind. You must not expect me to write often, or long letters the remainder of this term

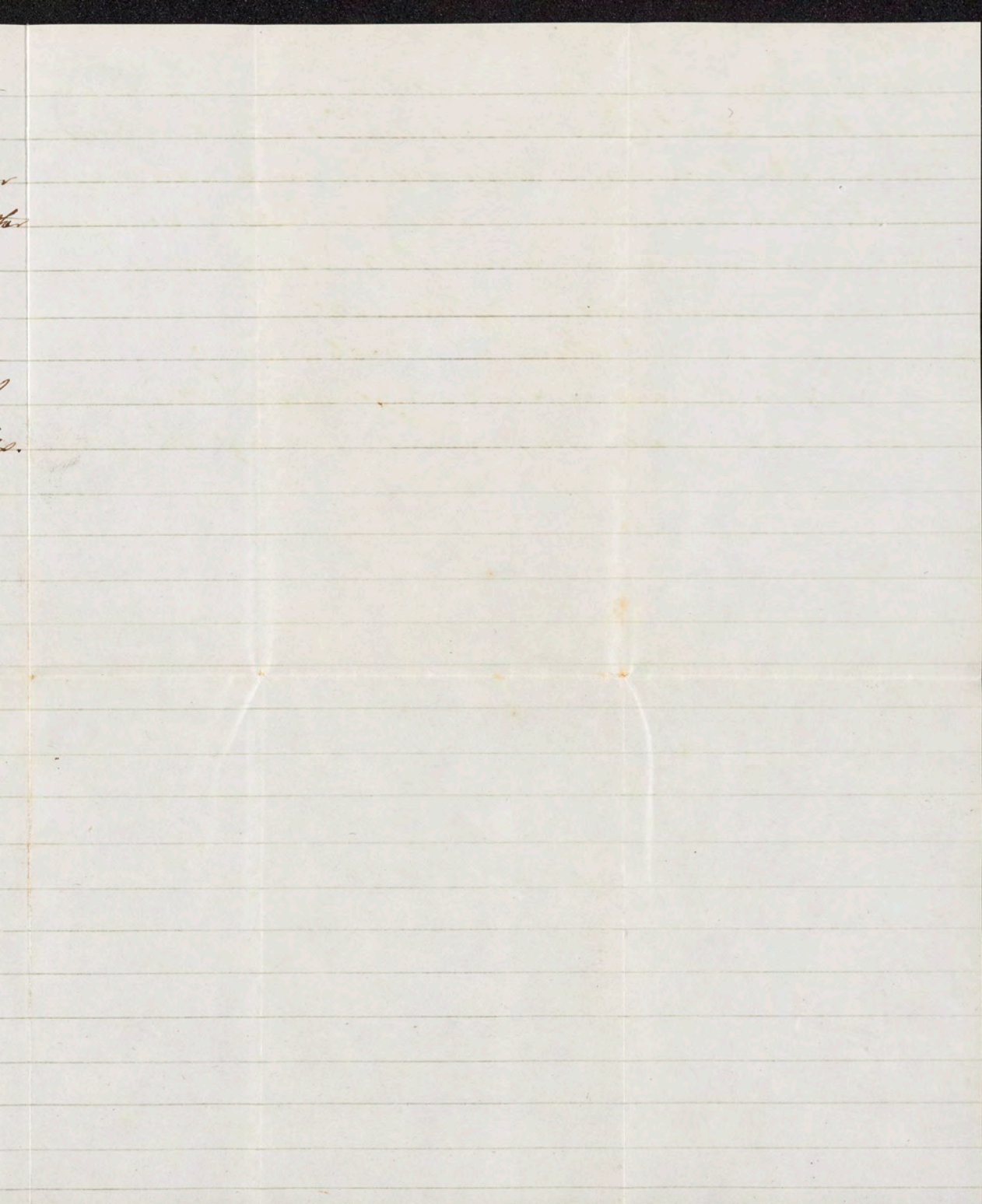


but as I find the improvement I have made I will let  
you know it. I think the improvement is just on Greek  
alone. But my room is too cold for me to write longer  
in it. Write soon. Give my love to Father's Grandfather  
and all, I will answer Dodi's letter as soon as I  
can. Your Son affectionately

Benj. L. Foster.

P.S. The  $\frac{15}{100}$  was on Greek alone, and I think I  
have made a greater improvement on each of the others.











1853 Dec. 16

Yale college Dec 16<sup>th</sup> 1853.

My Dear Father

When I wrote to you on last Sunday. I said that I would ask Professor Hadley's advice, as to my going into the examination, I have done so, and he advised me not to do so, but either to take leave of absence or a dismissal, he told me, and my friends also, that I would not succeed at the examination, and that it would be far better for me to, withdraw myself than, be rejected and I have taken a dismissal, or at least arranged it, that I could do so when my bills are paid, and in such a manner that I could again enter my class. Professor Hadley wished me to enter the next class, but I told him that I did not wish to do, and that you would not wish it, that if I entered college again, it would be with my present class, for I knew that if I could have had one more week, I could have passed the examination; and that is all that is required, but as I have been very regular I could give no reason for having it put off. You said in your letter that you thought, that thus far my education had been misdirected. I knew that it has been, I feel that the Messrs Lenz did not do me justice, and when I left there they told me I was prepared for college. I was not, and I have failed, in these studies they paid the



No least attention too. I have failed to realize my own expectations, when four months ago, I came to college it was with a certainty of success, and although now I feel down cast, and disheartened, yet it may be the means of arousing my energy, it has certainly opened my eyes to one fact, that talent alone will not answer, it needs energy with it. For your sake, and that of my Mother I regret that I have not taken a stand in college, for I know that you placed great confidence in me, if what Prof. Hadley says is true I leave college with a good character and if I can pass an examination on the studies of this term and the next there will be nothing to prevent my going in with the class, he told me it would not be required of me to be again examined on the preparatory studies.

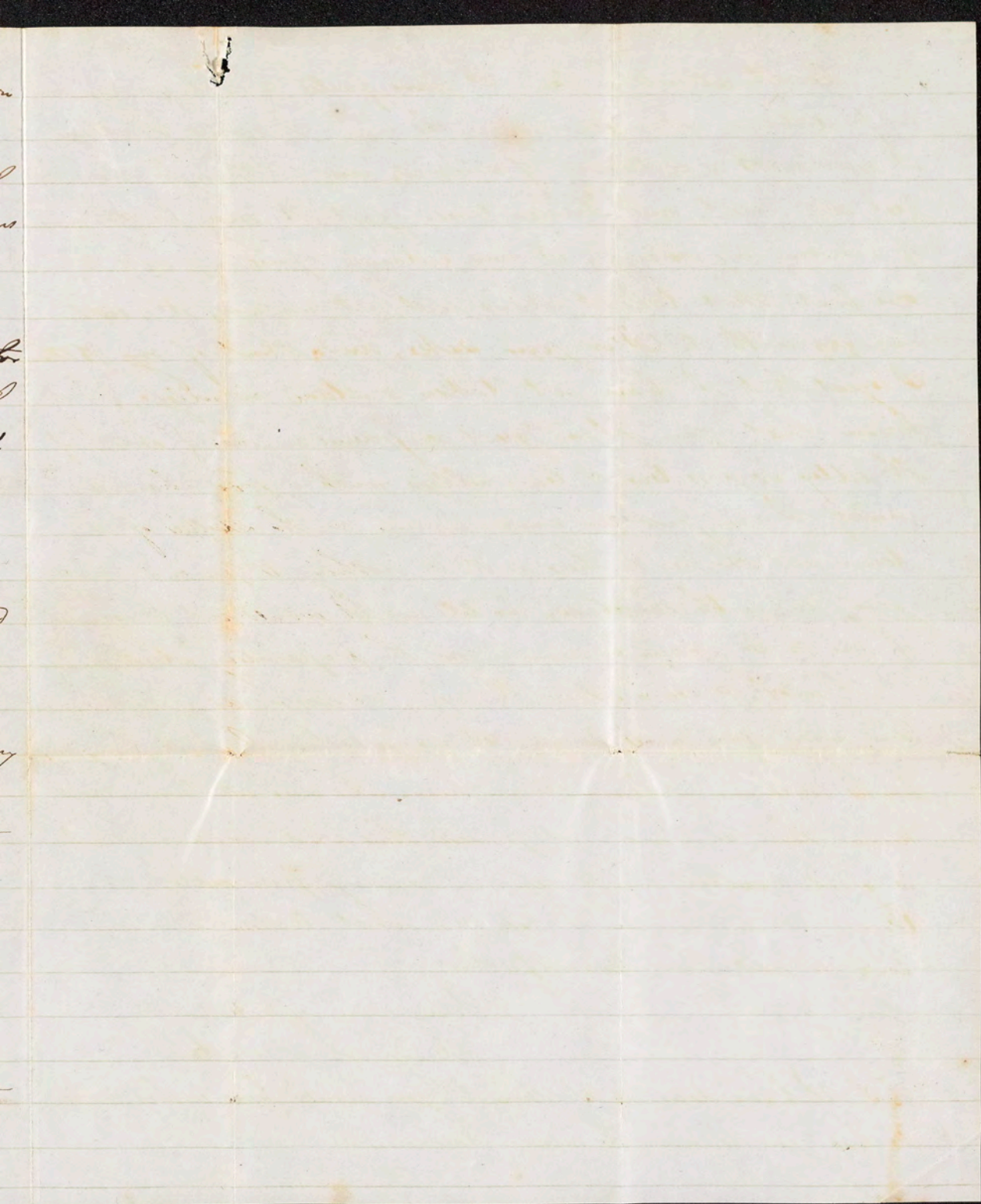
I wish to leave New Haven, as soon as possible and when you write to me, tell me whether I shall bring my books with me or leave them here. No one at home need know that I have not passed that examination, as it is quite customary to remain a way from college one term. When you write tell me what to do. Give my love to Mother, Grandfather,

Your son affectionately  
Benj. S. Foster.

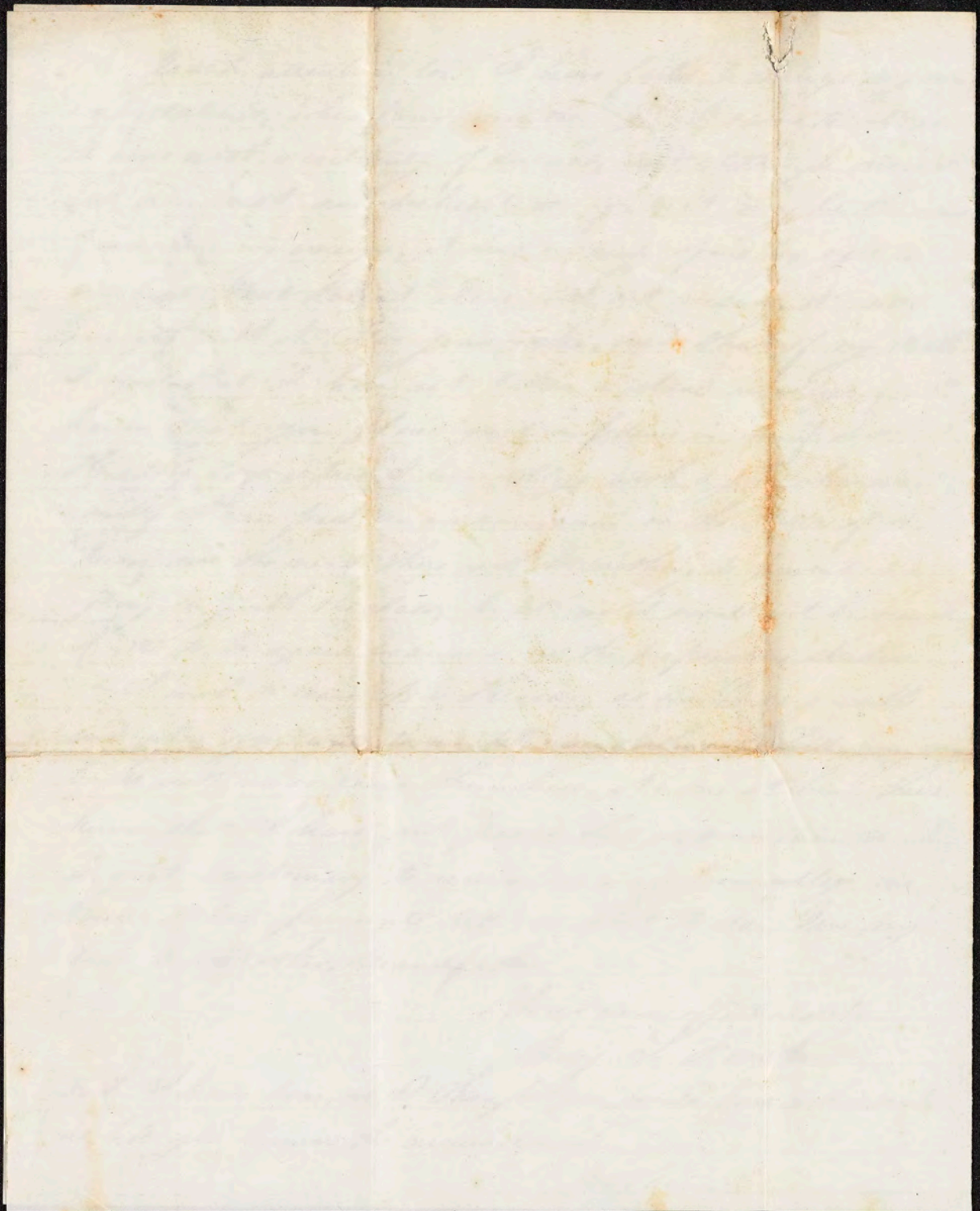
P.S. I have done, as I thought you would have wished me to do had you known the circumstances.

Benjamin











1853 Dec. 26

New Haven Dec 26<sup>th</sup> 1853.

Dear Father.

This morning I received your letter containing a draft for \$50. You say that my letter was as deficient in information as the former one. My bills are \$91, with the money I received I will pay my bill at my boarding house, and then there will remain \$46 & unpaid, the money I have received this term I have an account of, but it will be impossible for me to return home before my bills are paid, as they will not let me go, and I can't get a dismissal before my term bill is paid and I will have but five dollars, and that would not bring me far. I am sorry for it, as I am doing nothing here, and am but a trouble to my friends. What things I have that I would wish to sell, cannot ~~now~~ <sup>at present</sup> be sold, and when sold will not bring much. Do you wish me to sell my books. I had intended to bring those home. My bill unpaid are now \$46, and money to come home on, and until my bills are paid I cannot leave, as the man with whom I reside will not permit me.

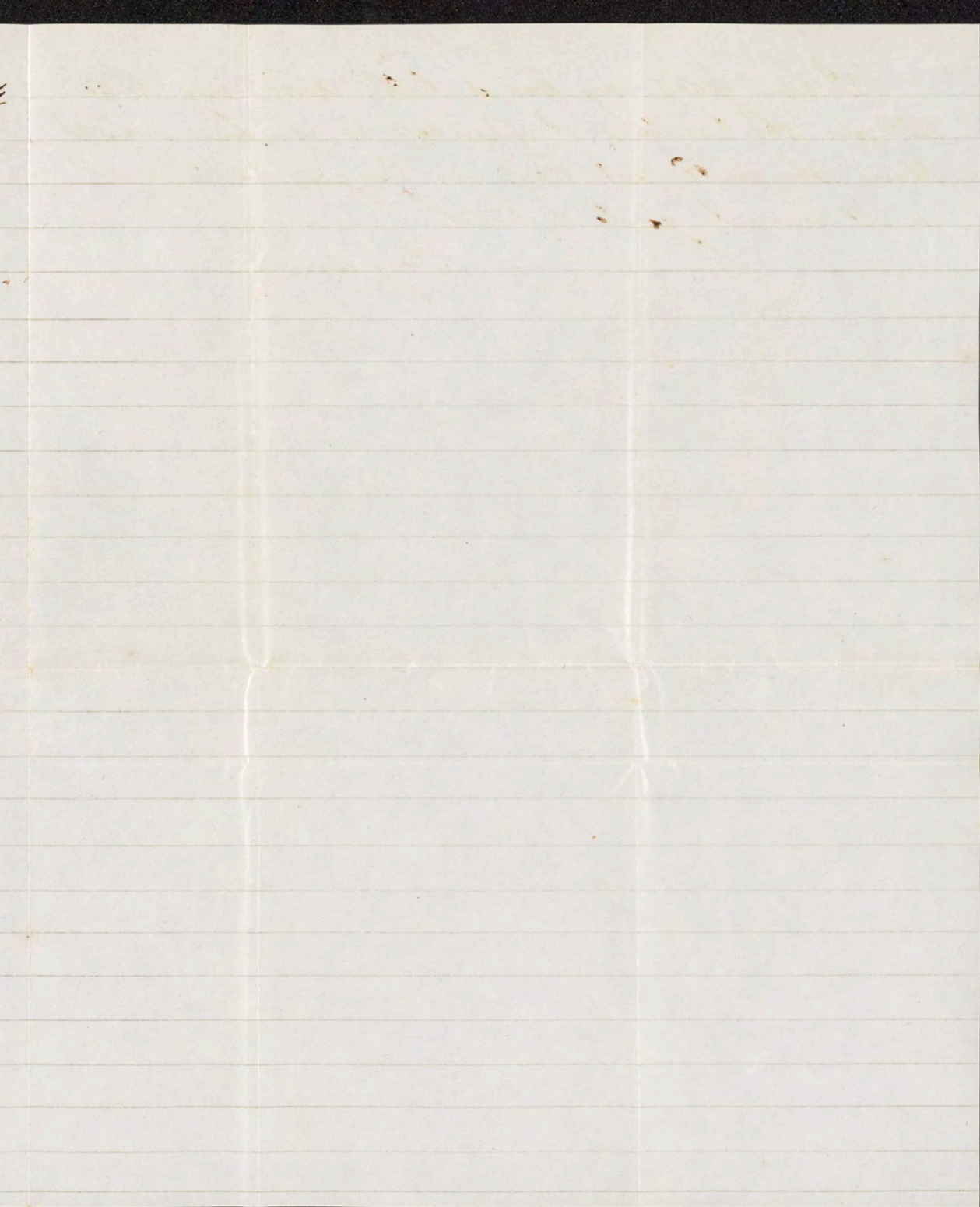
Your son affectionately  
Benj L. Foster.



I have paid my board bill, and my landlady  
told me that unless I intended to remain next  
term she could not keep me longer, so that I  
will have to go to a hotel.

Benjamin







I have paid my board bill, and my mother  
at me. I am sure I will be able to see her soon.  
I am sure she will not keep me from her. I  
will have to go to a school.

By your friend  
J. J. J.



1874 Oct. 31

Harrisburg, Penna., October 31st. 1874

Dear Ben:

I shall be greatly obliged to you if you can arrange the matter about which we spoke, by next Tuesday when I expect to be in town. I dislike exceedingly to ~~spend~~ allude to it in any way & only do so because of your having first voluntarily mentioned it & because I am urgently in need of some revenue just now, as I am pushed ~~up~~ closer to the wall than ever. On the strength of your promise I have got myself into a straight & don't see how I can get out.

I write you only because I have been away since last Tuesday & am going <sup>away</sup> again to be absent until next Tuesday noon. If you can do me the favor requested you will really very much oblige

To

Benj: L. Foster Esq

Yours to

Geo: H. Irwin







1875 May 3

# Mechanics' Bank,

Harrisburg, Pa., May 2 1875.

H. J. Utter - Esq., Cashier,

Dear Sir:

Yours of \_\_\_\_\_ is received.

I enclose, for collection and credit,

Under the note of Mr B. L. Porter is tacked up within a  
very few days I will put it in  
the hands of our city for collection

Mr Porter is trusting with  
me & I will not permit it

Respectfully,

J. C. Bomberger,  
Cashier.



Meekins' Bank

1874

at interest

of the same

J. C. Bomberger

1874



1875 May 28

May 28<sup>th</sup> 1875

Dear Ben:

You will not only favor Mr. Espy but myself also, if you can find time to fix up the bond according to promise. He left town last Tuesday morning for an absence of several weeks, but before going he gave me positive instructions to have the new bond substituted for the old one. I should like very much to accomplish this so that he can lay no blame on me on his return. It is unpleasant to me to insist on calling your attention again to the matter, but I need only mention the duties of course to find my excuse.

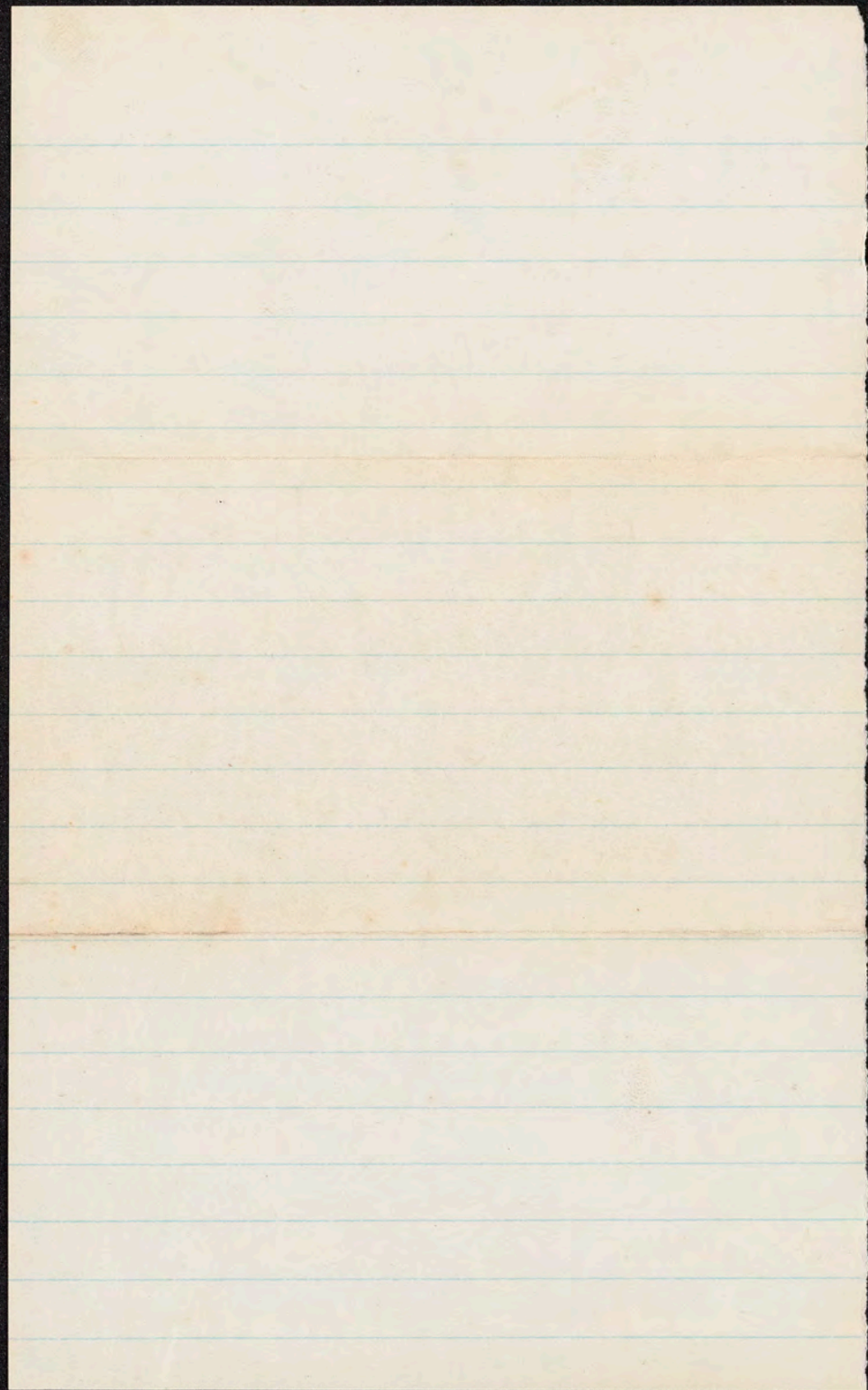
Yours

Geo: H. Swain

2

Benj: L. Foster, Esq







1875 July 30

Harrisburg July 30/75

Mr B. Forster

Sir Please call  
and Settel your account  
as we are in need of  
money the ballance of your  
account is forty three  
dollars & Ninety five cts from  
last Settlement do not  
dissapoint us and you  
will Oblige

Yours Respectfully  
Myers & Bro





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1878 Mar. 12

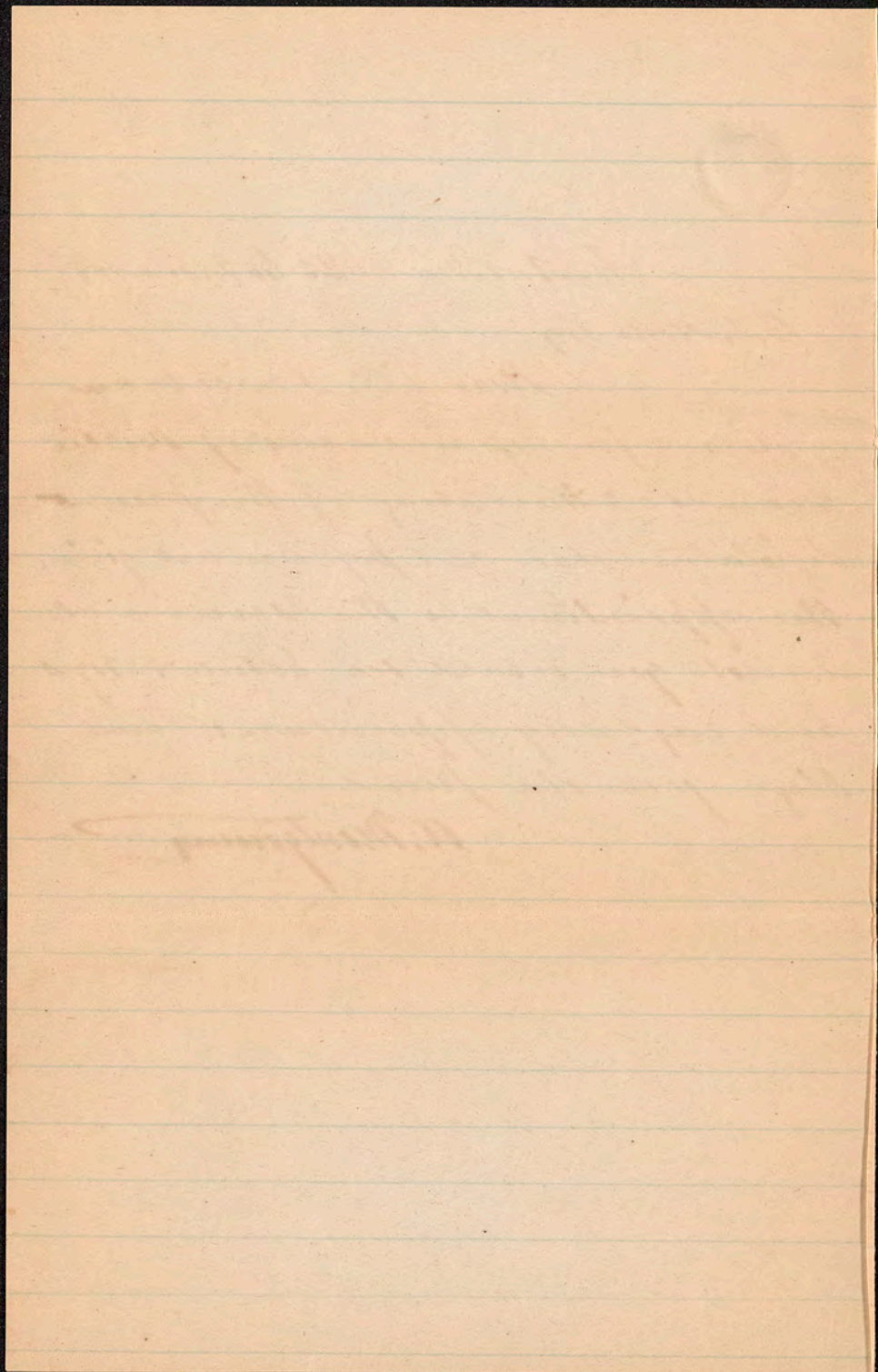
Farmville North Co March 12<sup>th</sup> 78

B. L. Forder Esq

Dear Sir: I will be an  
applicant for Superintendent of Public  
Grounds at Harrisburg. If the present  
Legislature does not pass an act giving  
the appointment to the Governor alone  
I wish you would see Schell & Noyes  
and urge my appointment. And  
blye your old Friend

R. Montgomery







1882 Jan. 20

THE  
BEST

Jan. 20th 1882  
Ray L. Foster Esq  
Dear Sir

If convenient  
to you I will be much  
obliged if you will call at  
my house at 7 1/2 by 8 this  
Evening

Yours Legl.  
Chas. L. Bailey



Call it upon Mr. Bay  
I am energy = discern  
They come out clear and

D.



1887 Apr. 12

April 12<sup>th</sup> 1887  
Rev. L. Foster Esq  
Dear Sir.

I had some not  
to say you when you called  
on Friday being. And the  
servants should have called  
me as I was slightly run down  
on account of recent work.  
If you are not engaged I will  
be pleased to see you this  
evening from 6 1/2 to 8 P.M.  
Yours Truly  
Wm. E. Bailey



\_\_\_\_\_



Pres. L. Foster Esq  
No 7. South Street  
Hannibury  
N. H.







Hansburg March 15<sup>th</sup>

Dear Friend

Received your letter last thursday. The first thing I must tell you is that Miss Street has gone home to prepare for her wedding she went last monday and did not bid any of us good bye she said she knew it would affect her so much that she would not be able to go that day I never loved a teacher as much as I loved Miss Street I guess you think that is the way you never love her till she is gone but it is not so with me I always bid her good bye and always will bid our new teacher just came to school. I cannot judge what she will be on so short an acquaintance but I must confess she is not much for Henry and I don't think Mrs Le Conte will ever get another teacher like Miss Street



the girls are all moving around on. On [redacted] he is to  
go on in three weeks. our new teachers name is Miss Elose.  
The Hutchinsons are to sing in Thanksgiving to night and  
tomorrow. Antonsen is going to night and then  
Miss Parker gave us nine pages in Geology and then  
I thought I might as well give up all thoughts of  
going as I have a just many other lessons besides.  
There is a paper here from Gale called the Gale Banger.  
I thought perhaps you might like to see it and I  
would send it to you. it is pretty poor thing I  
must say and I think they are a pretty bad set  
of boys that edit it. I don't think there was ever  
a boy unless he had very high moral principles  
went to college that did not return worse than  
before they went. the freshmen are so persecuted  
by the Sophomore classes that in their eagerness to  
win their ambition leads them astray and  
before they are aware of it they are acquainted  
with all the vices of a college life and then  
the temptations are so great that unless you have  
great firmness of character you are scarcely able to  
resist them and if you do not resist them



you grow wiser and wiser till you are expelled and thus  
you are paid for your folly. This is my own private  
opinion. I guess you think I have given a long lecture  
about that paper and it was not worth writing.  
The Hotel had some caught a fire and Kate  
Buchanan reported this afternoon that Thomas Barry  
said he saved nearly all the clothes wasn't he here  
from convicted. I say indeed I pity him. I have  
not read the story you alluded to in your last  
letter but I am going to try and get it to read.  
Jim Shunk supplies me with books from the  
State Library but I have not much time to read  
as I have so many studies to attend to but my  
letter is getting rather long and I must close or you  
will get tired reading it. Your friend  
Gill.

P.S. please tell me how Jim Coburn is some  
person wants to know 'write soon'.







Harrisburg February

Dear Friend

I received your letter yesterday I thought as we had not any school I would answer your letter. The examinations passed off very well the Calisthenes party which was in the evening the house was crowded. The girls were all dressed in white with blue sashes the compositions were read by Miss Street and Miss Parker in the day the lessons were recited the reports read and two magazines given to who ever had the best report. We all feel greatly relieved since it is over. You asked me why Mrs Le Conte closed her school so early she has not closed it it does not close till July. Was Rose Brooks here when you were in Harrisburg I mean Mrs Le Conte sister she



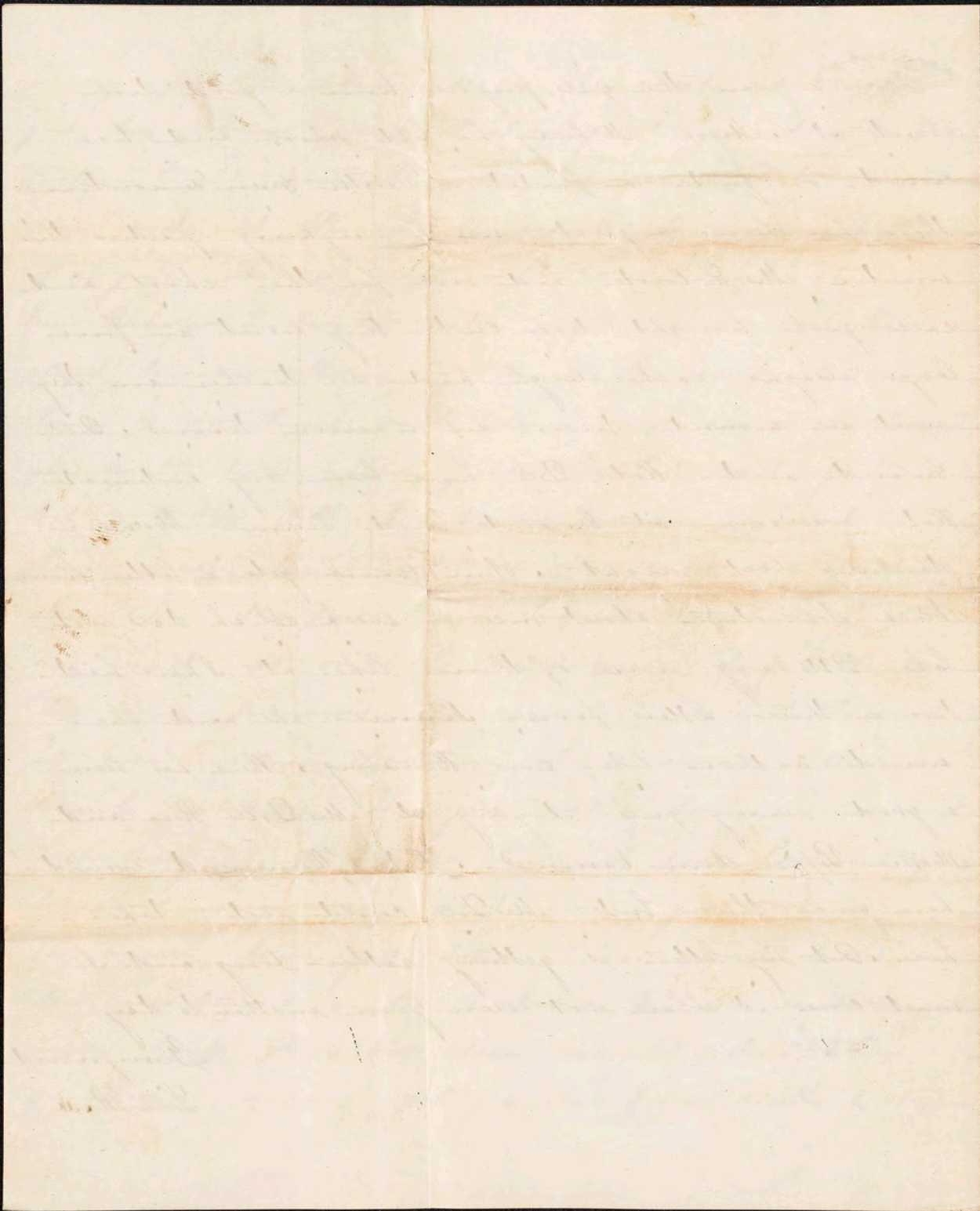
is very ugly but I think she is the most affectionate  
girl I ever knew she and I are great friends & We have  
another bright character in our school Kate Hammond  
she boards at Shunks if want to know what  
of a girl she is just ask Jim Shunk she is  
Em Bishop's husband's sister neither Jim nor her  
speak to each other sometimes for week she says  
Jim is too dumb and Jim says she is too dumb  
she can't talk. I have just finished reading the  
tale of Cedars I think it is the most beautiful thing  
I ever read the character of the Jewess is a good  
deal like the Jewess in Sarahol. I suppose you  
have read it one of Scott's novels they both have  
the same firmness of character I intend to read  
it over again I admire it so much Jim  
Shunk supplies the girls with books he is about  
half crazy about Anna Pearson she does not go  
to school any more and never goes out of  
the house Jim goes down there and looks in  
the window and watches Anna said caught  
him and Alex the other night I suppose  
you know he has got a clerkship worth 600



a year the girls plague him a good deal  
about it. Maggie McKinley has left school and has  
carried on quite a flirtation with Green Lincolnton  
There has been a great many sleighing parties this  
winter Mrs Le Court had one for the school and  
each girl bought two cuts they went in four  
large sleighs each sleigh had a teacher in they  
went all around town six or seven times. Bill  
Garland and Kate Doll have been very intimate  
Kate was over at Garlands and Jennie Macdon  
dancing last night. Sam Shank gets a letter from  
Black Johnston about once a week Black does not  
like Pittsburg none of them like it I have had  
two or three letters from Annie she said she  
would rather live in Kansas. There has been  
a good many girls staying at Mrs Dolls Rose and  
Mollie Pipers Sam Cammel. Kate Hammond would  
have gone there but Mrs Doll could not take  
her. But my letter is getting rather long and I  
must close it I have not seen your mother to day

Your friend  
Lill Pratt







Dauphin County,

Dauphin Court,  
Jury' Foster Esq  
Shannon St John  
Per 16



Barnes  
84 Nassau St  
New York



Lewisburg May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Friend Ben,

I recieved your letter and was glad to hear from you; but sorry to hear that you did not intend to come back to Lewisburg. I made all possible haste in packing up your books and lamp. I think the lamp will carry safe. "As good luck would have it", Johnson Wall's boat started this morning and I put the boxes on board of it. The captain would not stop at Antes' ware-house, as he had to stop at Johnson's. You will find your goods there. There are two boxes, directed to Gen. John Forster. It cost me about 50 cts to pack them. If Mother is in H., you can pay her.

Give my respects to your Father and Mother and to your Brother's family. Excuse haste.

P.S. Write me soon.

Andie

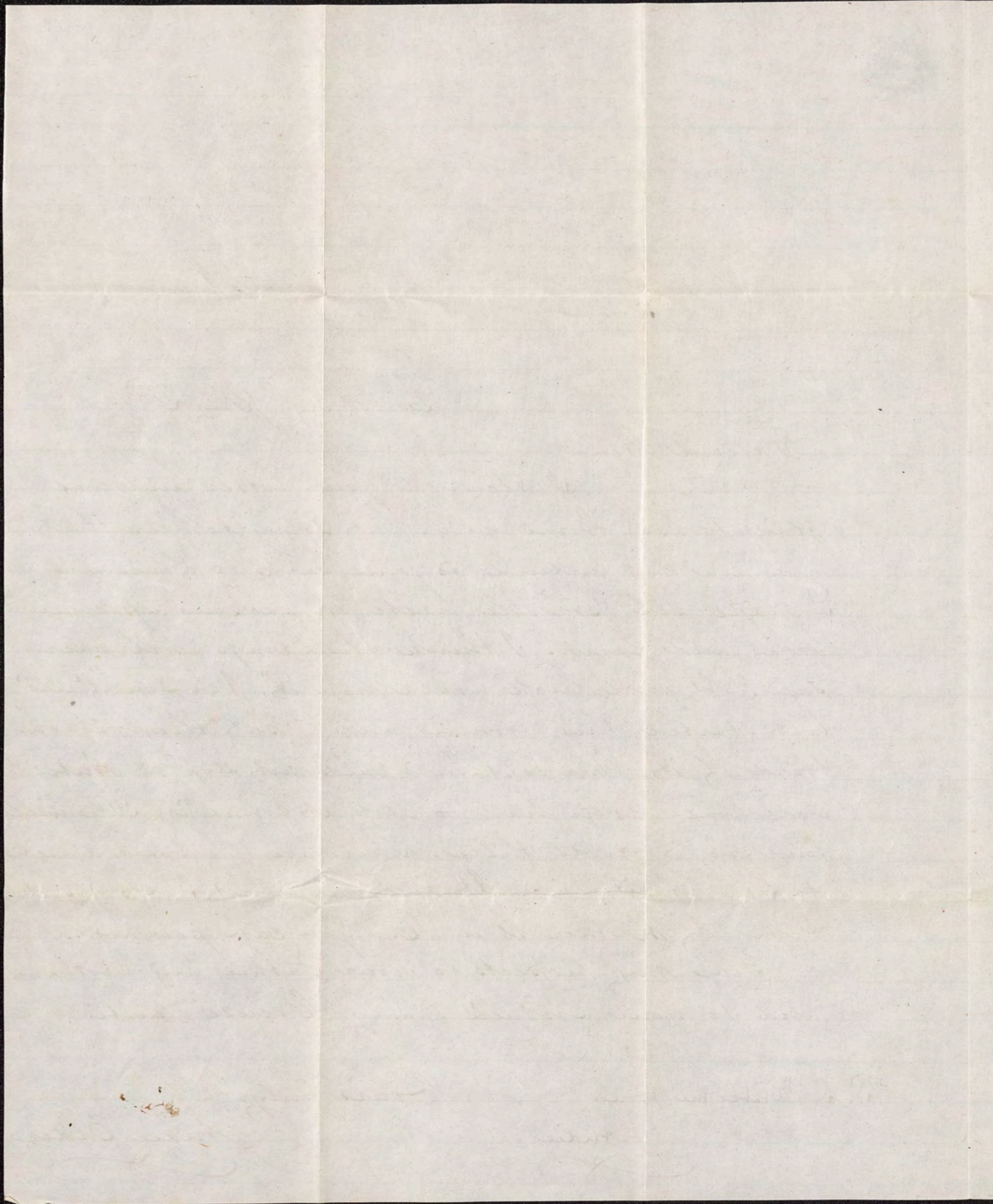


Yours truly,

Andie Elder















Mr. Benjamin L. Forster  
Harrisburg  
Dauphin Co.  
Penn.